A NECESSITATED APPEAL

mbly tendered to the High Court of

ARLIAMENT,

espect to be had to tender CON-
ENCES according to their *Order* in
mb. last, that they may be free to practise
he Duties of Piety against *Antichristian* tyranny,
and worlds malignancy.

ch as are commonly (but unjustly) called
BROWNISTS.

ALSO,

stions conscionably propounded for due
n by the Scriptures, that by the Word, and
y the Sword, these Differences may be ended or re-
iled, since *thr weapons* of Christians (to gain
t to the faith) *are not carnall but spiri-
tuall.* 2 Cor. 10. 4.

. 27. God perswade Japheth to dwell in the tents of Sem.
Amos 3. 3.
Can two walk together except they be agreed.
Lam. 4. 18.
y hunt our steps, that we cannot go in our streets.
*. 1. O blessed he that considereth the poore weakling, in the day of
Jehovah will deliver him.*

Imprinted at *London*, *May* 1645.

To the high Court of PARLIAMENT.

IF the most high God and supream in heaven and earth in comparison of whom all others are lesse then the drop of a bucket to the Sea, or the dust in the ballance to the whole earth; vouchsafe yet liberty and grace for the poorest saint to come unto him, and is ready to hear their suits, then we trust your Honors, who are stiled gods, will esteem it your honour to be imitators of him herein as dear children; Our respect amongst men, we confesse, is very mean and lowe, and so have few friends to prefer ought on our behalf, yet the experience taken of your many worthy deeds as to the Nation in generall, so to many particulars, whose conditions were so miserable, that there was nothing but mere justice and mercy that moved you to do them right, and to set them free from their oppressors. The consideration hereof (Right Honorable) incourageth us also to come as it were at the last houre, not doubting to participate of relief from you in this day of our fear from the reproacher and oppressors. To lay open what miseries and extremities, our predecessors in this Gospel way, have endured at the hands of unreasonable men, had we but a Mr. Prinn to search records, it would make a hard heart to yern in compassion, that natives should find such measure from their brethren: For what have we not suffered, even simply for conscience towards God, losse of liberty to the utter undoing of us and ours, by stripes, by imprisonments loathsom, handlings therein tyrannicall and inhumane, to the losse of manies lives, denied the benefit of Law, the Subjects inheritance, divers worthy and glorious lights put out, deprived of life as malefactors; Others banished to forrain parts to seek their bread in desolate places. But some may haply now say, are not the banished returned? is not the maive oppressor ceased? are not their horns cut off? It is not denied, but to your eternall praise be it spoken, that many worthy deeds have been done by you, and from this experience in so many presidents, we rested under hope of good issues even to our selves also in the end. We prayed, we praised God for you, extended our selves in person and states to our power, yea as we may say, beyond our power for Common good, not esteeming our lives too dear to sacrifice in so good a cause against tyrannie, for your Honors priviledge, and Subjects liberty. But whilest we were thus glorying in our God in the assembly of his Saints, unexpectly sad tydings came to our ears, that the Saints liberty in Church way was called into question, inveighed against by the children of the Prelates,

Isa. 40. 15. Psal. 50. 15. Psal. 81. 1.

lates, whose spirit seemed to continue with them, as the good spirit of Elijah *rested upon* Elisha *after he was taken up, defaming the cause of Christ held out by us in Pulpit and Print, where they know we dare not hear them for sin against God, nor are permitted to answer them in the later, the Presse being denied us. By which means they make us odious in the eyes of men, and occasion hard thoughts in the minds of authority, whereby they work themselves into favour, and cause hard measure towards us, hence some are brought up from far, for not putting into their mouths, by tiths and offerings, to their exceeding trouble and charge, others intimated against as men dangerous to the State, laying false things to their charge, which they dare not appear to justifie, yet their credit seems to sway so much with Authority, that righteous men are committed to prison, or to custody, without offence known, or conviction. Now what shall poore sheep do, if left under the power and courtesie of such wolvish natures, men that never saw the face of a right reformed Church, or other government then that where-under they were educated, the Romish regiment of the Prelacie their Courts and Officers. They ingrosse all knowledge to themselves, as if they had learn'd of the malicious Jews,* Joh.7.49. *to judge the people that followed Christ ignorant of the Law, and so cursed, or those of Corinth,* 1 Cor. 14.36. *who carry themselves so, as if the Word of God came from them, or unto them onely, this occasioneth many to have the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons,* Jam.2.1. *yet we know that those that have the Spirit of God know the things of God, for they are freely given unto them of God:* 1 Cor.2.12. *To limit the spirit to learned men as now esteemed, is dissonant from Gods Word, for the winde bloweth where it listeth,* Joh.3.8. *God out of the mouth of babes ordaineth strength,* Psal.8.2. *Gods power is manifested in weaknesse. Far be it from the sons of men to endeavour to hinder Gods winds from blowing on his garden:* Cant. 4.16. *If men that are not ordained either by some reformed Church, or by these appointed here to ordain, may not preach, that is, not speak unto men for their edification, exhortation and comfort in private places, what shall become of us poore weaklings, who through the iniquity of the times were deprived of our Pastors? dissolve our Church states we dare not, to communicate where we have no faith, how can we do it without sin? or expect a blessing where no promise is? Our predecessors in the faith have left their testimonies sealed with their blood,* Barrow, Greenwood, Penry, *&c. Those that escaped with their lives beyond the Seas, have published our Confession of faith agreeable to the Scriptures, near fifty yeers since, which they exhibited to be discussed by the most famous Universities in the Low Countreys, Scotland,*

Germany,

Germany, and France. Now in equity those that stile us brethren, namely, those of the Scottish Nation amongst others (having been silent and not answered us all this time) we suppose should carry themselves as brethren towards us; yet by experience of late we know it to our grief, they have condemned us (as Jobs friends did him, Job 32. 3.) and yet they have found no answer for us. Now doth our Law judge any man before it hear him, and know what he doth, Joh. 7. 51. Now because we would not trouble them with large books of ours remaining unanswered to this day (for ought we know) some of us wrote a few principall differences, in as modest manner as we could in a letter to a principall of them for satisfaction in writing, but the party would not be induced to it; being demanded notwithstanding our differences, whether he judged such as we might enjoy our freedome in our Church way under them: he answered, yea; Such as are appointed now Licencers for the Presse, approved these our questions after hearing and sight, held them necessary to be answered, yet refused to give his Imprimatur to it. If so, we trust we need not question your Honors patronage in this way of Christ, we knowing our principles to be orthodoxall in respect of the faith, and our order consentaneous to the Scriptures, and concurring to all due obedience to Civill Authority for conscience sake, our very Enemies being judges. And if those called Independents may judge between us, in their Apologeticall Narration, they deem the way of true Church practise to be between the Presbyterians and us, who are commonly (but unjustly) called Brownists. Now if by the verdict of those that are chosen by your Honorable Assembly to sit in Councell with them, we are as neer the truth as those that would be all in all, and depresse all others, we trust our right and interest in common privileges is not lesse then theirs. But we will ceasse claime of privilege, if the truth favour not our part rather then theirs. Oh that it might please your Honourable Assemblie but to vouchsafe to read and consider the differences between us and the Presbyterians, thrice printed beyond the Seas, first in Latin by one of our Pastors Mr. John Robinson, in the University of Leyden in Holland, and twice since in English, remaining now some 26 yeers unanswered, if we erre (as who doth not) it is unknown to us; if any others know us guilty, let them use spirituall weapons for our due conviction, and we trust through the Lords goodnesse he will give us teachable hearts to yeeld to the truth; In the mean time we fly (under God) to your Honorable Assemblies protection, we living in our places as becomes faithfull Subjects; that we may not go in danger of our lives, and intollerable molestation of the rude multitude, who have taken boldnesse to kill some, and give out Bils to make uproars to disturbe and pull

down houses, even in this famous City the chief seat of your Honors judgment, now if it were but a comman garrison, how dangerous such thing might prove who knows? But we trust that your Honors, our wise noble Patriots, will take order to suppresse these wilde people, that the sword may not be put into mad mens hands to spoile a peaceable well minded people: upon which your just protection under God, we cheerfully depend, humbly supplicating that since we are so traduced, and in danger to be ruined daily for our practise in the way of the Gospel, your mercifull hearts will find out some way for satisfaction of our weak consciences (as your Vote or Ordinance was in September last; Indeed for such as our selves to represent before Your Honorable grave Senate what our shallow thoughts are, might haply seem insufferablie presumptuous, yet that it may not be thought we are conceited, and shun the light, by avoiding triall with the learned called together by your Honours to give their advice in matters of Gods Word, and Christs government. We stand ready to hear what they have to object against our published bookes lying unanswered, namely, our Confession of Faith, Apologie, (Mr. Robinsons Apologie) the Peoples Plea for the exercise of Prophecy, Justification of Separation. But because these things will require a long time for answer, if they have the mind as becomes Christians to bring to right such as they judge to erre out of the way, our desires are they would not disdain to answer these questions propounded, by the unerring evidence of Gods Word; So may we through Gods blessing, be reduced from the error of our way, they judge we walk in to their offence, and so we may see that of the Prophet Zach. 14. fulfilled in this our region, that the Lord may be King over all; and as there shall be one Lord, so his name one among st us, which is the prayer of your poore Suppliants.

The meanest and unworthiest servants of God the free Churches of Christ resident in and about this City.

Eleven

Eleven questions propounded for due satisfaction by the Word.

1. THe first thing to be resolved, how the Parishes still continuing *statu quo prius*, in the same matter and form as they did when they stood subordinate to the prelaticall power, can be esteemed the true Churches of Christ?

2. How these forecreated Ministers by the power of the prelacy can, without any other call, be esteemed the true Ministers of Jesus Christ, with whose Ministery the Saints may lawfully communicate?

3. We desire to be resolved *quo jure* that Presbyters as Presbyters, without the call of a lawfull proper Church Assemblie can make Church Officers?

4. It is desired to know by what authoritie Presbyters of divers Churches may sit in a Classical Assemblie exercising Church power over severall bodies or particular Churches? if yea, why may they not there in that sequestred place minister the Sacraments, and all other proper Church administrations also?

5. It is demanded whether a manifested visible or positive holinesse be not required of all such as are to be admitted members of the visible Church?

6. Whether doth the Scripture injoyn every one to become a member of that congregation, and to frequent that place of congregating where his habitation or most residence is?

7. Whether a man may give the honour of maintenance for his works sake, to one he judgeth a false Minister;

8. Whether do the Scriptures give warrant to Christians to assemble in false Churches, or to participate with false Ministers in the executing their office to their flock, under pretence of participating with gifts onely?

9. We desire to know why such who are men members in the Church, to whom God hath given gifts to interpret the Scriptures to the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the Church, may not with the leave or approbation of the Church exercise their gifts publiquely, albeit, they were never trained up in the Universities

ſities in ſchool Arts of Logick, Rhetorick, or Phyloſophie? yea why may not ſuch bear office of Teacher or Paſtor, if furniſhed with the gifts of teaching, exhorting, and prayer?

10. Whether it be not injoyned the Saints in Church fellowſhip, to bear with ſome differences and infirmities of their brethren committed through frailty and ignorance, and to walk in peace by one rule ſo far as they are come, till God reveal farther? Doth it not likewiſe hold in proportion, that in differences in nature one Church may and ought to bear with another, yea many Churches with one, and not to be a Law to ſuch as ſo do, either to excommunicate (had they the power as they have) or to provoke the Civil Magiſtrate againſt them, to trouble or leſt them, or to baniſh them out of their Dominions?

11. Laſtly, we deſire to ſee ſome ſubſtantiall grounds, that publick meeting places or Churches (as they are commonly called) however formerly built or conſecrated to the honour of Saints or Angels; yet now (as tis ſaid) al ſuperſtitious reſpect is taken off by ſupreme Authority, ſo that now no repute of holines is adhering or imputed to them, but eſteemed merely as convenient civill meeting places for men to meet in to ſecure them from wind and weather, and for ſuch decent offices or ſervices, either religious or civill as occaſions are offered, ſince many queſtion whether any inſtance can be given, that any artificiall thing ſimply idolatrous in its inſtitution, can have its ſuperſtition taken off, without changing it to civill uſe, or altering the form, or demoliſhing.

FINIS.